

So This Is
GOLF!

By Harry Leon Wilson



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So This Is
GOLF!

OTHER BOOKS
BY
HARRY LEON WILSON

MERTON OF THE MOVIES

BUNKER BEAN

RUGGLES OF RED GAP

SOMEWHERE IN RED GAP

THE GIBSON UPRIGHT

(In collaboration with Booth Tarkington)

MA PETTENGILL

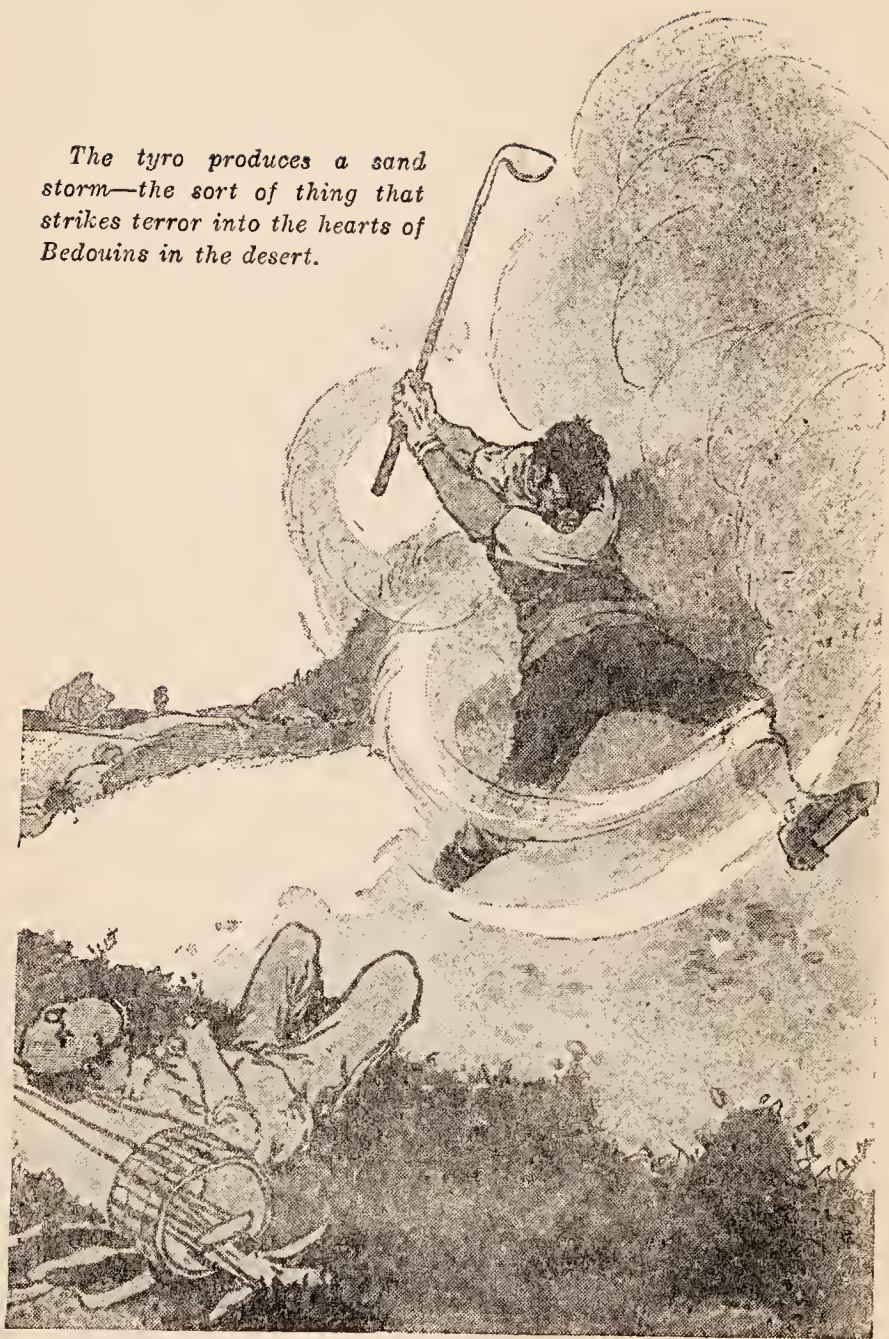
THE WRONG TWIN

THE BOSS OF LITTLE ARCADY

THE LIONS OF THE LORD

THE SPENDERS

The tyro produces a sand storm—the sort of thing that strikes terror into the hearts of Bedouins in the desert.



SO THIS IS GOLF!

*By the man who wrote Merton of
the Movies and Ruggles of Red Gap*

Harry Leon Wilson

Illustrations by M. L. BLUMENTHAL



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M. L. Blumenthal Pictures

The Aspiring Golfer

The tyro produces a sand storm—the sort of thing
that strikes terror into the hearts of Bedouins
in the desert *Frontispiece*

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So This Is Golf!

SO *THIS* IS GOLF!

CHAPTER I

THE man stands on the fifteenth tee. He has just driven a perfectly topped ball, a true ground gripper; it went to the bottom of the deep ditch a hundred yards beyond. This is really more than a ditch, being very deep, with precipitous sides. Anywhere but on a golf course it would be called Devil's Gorge or something scenic, and people would come miles to look at it, and warn the little ones to stand back from the edge.

The man is now speaking. It is more like an oration, warm and hoarse with invective. Standing erect, head up, his chin, like the prow of a battleship, projecting well over the edge of the tee, he hurls heated words down the empty fairway. He can be heard playing golf a long way off, though the words lose their edge on the summer breeze. Good thing, too. We should not be permitted to do more than imagine them in these pages. But you get the effect.

The man ceases to speak. He has said everything he could think of that promised to help, and he has thrown in a bit extra because he felt that way.

He drives another ball and clears the ditch. He hurries along. He seems to say that he will now teach that ball a bitter lesson. Above it he grimly takes from his bag, a bag tastefully trimmed with the Macpherson tartan, the choice tailor-made brassy that has been fitted to his figure for nine dollars and fifty cents by Angus McAngus. He lunges fiercely at the ball and scars the fair turf something cruel, removing the father of all divots. The divot gets off on a true line and outdistances the ball by five yards. The ball has been but slightly disturbed.

This crisis is too poignant for words. The man merely strides to the nearest tree and with perfect stance and swing wraps about its trunk the shaft of the choice brassy. He then laughs in a hollow manner and goes swiftly away from there. He is somewhat eased in mind by this demonstration that he is a man and not a worm.

Presently he is wheedling a ball down the sixteenth fairway and into the ditch that guards the green. He finds it coyly nestled in a heel print. Pausing only to calculate that the heel producing the print was that of a man weighing four hundred pounds, he takes from the beautiful bag with the Macpherson tartan a weapon especially recommended by Angus McAngus. With this he produces a sand storm. It is no mere flurry. It is

the sort of thing that strikes terror to the hearts of Bedouins in the desert, causing them to put their trusty touring camels into reverse, to shield their faces with the burnoose and to call out the name of Allah.

The man calls out something to the same effect in his native tongue. The storm rages. Fiercely the blast swirls about its unprotected victim, who did not think to bring a burnoose. He no longer calls out; the sand has impeded his utterance. This is some of the worst golf he ever tasted.

He wipes his eyes and instead of speaking he behaves like a peevish wildcat. The storm has died, the sun may again be seen. Pausing only to twine the storm maker about the bole of a stout oak the man goes swiftly away from there. A club a hole seems to be about par for him.

The seventeenth hole is mercifully uncomplicated save by a few minor snares. The golf architect has here risen above his habitual perversions, as if resolving henceforth to lead a better life. In consequence the man reaches the eighteenth tee without the loss of another club. He has holed out a snappy six on the seventeenth and feels a bit of the old thrill. He permits himself to admire the scenery. The fairway is wide, a vista of shining emerald along the rock-trimmed margin of an opal sea. Innocent little wavelets strike in play against

the rocks. All Nature seems to smile. The man tees up a ball, the last but one in the pouch of the beautiful bag. It is a choice ball, advertised to give more distance than any other ball. It has a touch of platinum or a Burmese ruby or something inside to make it go. It costs two dollars, but what is money if you can lengthen your drive?

The man addresses the ball—not too politely. “Now, you so-and-so—so-and-so, you don’t know it but you’re going to take a long ride.”

Does the costly ball hear? It gives no sign. It merely rests there on its hillock of sand, pallid and expensive. The man takes a practice swing. Perfect! That’s it—get the wrists in ahead of the carcass! He takes his stance. He frowns darkly at a nursemaid and child a half mile back of him, then swings. The ball takes a long ride as he had promised, a long, low, swift flight which, if continued sufficiently, would bring it to rest on one of those far fairy islands thronged with dusky native copras, minutely arrayed, who will allow themselves to be photographed for a bottle of gin. For that matter, who wouldn’t be photographed in almost nothing for a bottle of gin? But of course the man’s ball doesn’t go that far, not even with the one-carat diamond at its center, because the man didn’t hit it hard enough. It had perfect direction but not the distance. So it plunks into

the opal sea. This is not a part of the fairway. It is too big for a water hazard. The ball sinks as neatly as any common dollar ball bought from a caddie for thirty-five cents.

Again the man can be heard playing golf. But he is off his game today and his language has run low. Like the venom of the rattle or the inky protection of the giant squid, there is only so much of it. He quits after discovering this, and tees up the last of his costly long-distance balls. He lets go. To his amazement it speeds down the real fairway. Not so far as the advertisement promised; not so far as you could expect for a couple of dollars; still, a fair drive—except for that slice unaccountably developing at the latter end of its flight. It has stopped in a rough area upgrown with one of the lesser-known cereals.

The man hums lightly as he hastens to it. Has he not cheated the cruel sea? Above the ball he takes from his bag a beautiful mashie niblick, his best-liked club. It is autographed by Abe Mitchell and was secured for him at great pains, in addition to the expense, by good old Angus McAngus. The man parks his feet correctly, frowns down the fairway, glances off at a distant motorcar, not hiding his annoyance, and fires when ready. The ball rises gracefully from its couch, achieves the altitude record, develops distance promisingly, but

then angles insanely to the left. It plunks into the still opal sea. Not so far out as the other, but far enough. The lucid water closes above it and the opal glint is again unmarred. An ocean makes nothing of a golf ball more or less.

The man stands a moment in deep contemplation. Then once again he swings the perfect mashie niblick autographed by Abe Mitchell. He has the correct stance, he breaks the wrists perfectly, the shot is well timed, and the follow through beyond criticism. The club rises gracefully into the air, develops distance as it whirls, and it, too, sinks beneath the opal sea, autograph and all. There is a deadly glitter in the man's eyes as the insatiate deep swallows his pet. His eyes are red, but still you can see the glitter. He stalks with dignity to the little jutting headland beyond which his treasures have come to rest. He poises there, tense and solemn.

"That does settle it," he mutters briefly, unclenching his teeth for this purpose. "Never again! I'm through!"

Hard upon this he assumes the correct stance, whirls the beautiful bag with the Macpherson tartan three times about his head and lets go with a superb follow through. The bag does not get so far as the balls that give you a lot of distance in the drive, but it gets far enough. The lovely

water lisps above it. A score of pearly bubbles rise over its last resting place. The relentless sea has claimed its own. The man dusts his hands one against the other.

"Never again!" he repeats. He goes swiftly away from there.

And that is golf.

The time is six hours later. The opal sea is paled by the rays of a rising moon that scatter silver along the fairway and nest it among the branches of the gnarled pine at the verge of the little headland. All is still save for the gentle play of wavelet against rock, and the recurrent bronchial protest of a late and invisible gull. But whose is this skulking figure that skirts yonder edge of the fairway, and now, concealment no longer possible, comes boldly across from screening shadows to the water's edge? You know well enough whose it is.

It sits on the little jutting headland and is also silvered over by the impartial moon. It looks earnestly out to sea. The prospect is one of distinguished beauty. Galleons and shallops, fair freighted, might ride at anchor there, luminous yet dim, duskily glowing with all romance. But we are off the key. The man is now serenely prosaic. If his mind is above the earth at all it is to feel

grateful for certain cosmic accuracies. He is gratefully remembering, perhaps, that the earth in its flight does not slice, nor the moon hook. He is glad to feel that one of them is gently but firmly pulling that blanket of water back from the flanks of the other so he can get down on those rocks and recover his beautiful bag and the mashie niblick autographed by Abe Mitchell.

Now the moon has done its work. It is low tide. So the man clambers down to the gaunt rocks. He clumps and sloshes and slides. But he is not vocal as a few hours since. He will be just as happy if he is not now observed. Over rocks slippery with marine vegetation, among spined, shelled or gooey invertebrates, useful enough in biology but having no recognized place in the royal and ancient game, he gropes a painful way with uncertain feet and bruised hands. He exhibits a patience that should have been his back on the loathly fifteenth. A glad cry, quickly smothered. From a shallow pool he has brought up the mashie niblick, the autograph unimpaired. A slightly louder glad cry, also smothered, and from a neighboring pool he has salvaged the bag trimmed with the Macpherson tartan. A crab scuttles from its recesses, but he is not out after crabs. He is back on the fairway in five—two sloshes, two slips and a barked knee.

But this night's work is not over. Dripping like a recovered body, he proceeds to the ditch on the sixteenth where the deadly sirocco lately hid him from mortal view and stifled his well-chosen remarks. He searches for the oak about which he lately festooned his niblick like a clinging vine. He does not at first find it. Could some low scoundrel have passed that way and sneaked off with his good old niblick? No; here it is. Angus will reshaff it for three dollars or thereabouts.

On to the fifteenth! That good old form-fitting brassy—he'd never be able to play again without that. He recovers the severed head. All it needs is another shaft, and Angus has his measure. The night's work is done. He goes swiftly away from there. And as he goes, this is what he is really thinking. He is really thinking—as a man really thinks when all the time he knows it is foolish—that he has at last shown the bag and clubs that he is not to be trifled with. He thinks he will have taught them a lesson. He thinks they will understand what a narrow escape they have just had, and behave right in future.

And from this sort of thinking as he clumps and drips down the road he modulates into a dream of expertness—that is, he begins to play mental golf. He is on the fifteenth tee, a statue of confidence. He gets off a whale of a drive, two hun-

dred and twenty-five yards, at least. No, must be more than that, what with the downhill roll—say, two hundred and forty or forty-five. Gosh, that was certainly a sweet ball! Now for a good, full mashie with some nifty back spin. Slow up, down without rushing! Say, will you look at that little pill roll up—acting like a trained pig! Not too close though. We want a good putt left. Not too easy, but on the other hand nothing phenomenal. Just an average putt of about five feet, the kind that professionals are so likely to miss. Steady now! Get the line. A gentle sweep, iron close to the ground. Watch her roll in. A snappy three on a four-par hole. Some class to that, boy!

On he maunders, dripping sea water and playing perfect mental golf. He finished the course out, two under par. And if I have not made a certain detail plain let me do it here.

The man is a man in the middle years—not a child.

And that is golf.

CHAPTER II

GOLF consists of exercise and emotion, in parts of one to nine respectively. The exercise is often said to be salutary. The emotions are frequently devastating. The game has three grades: Supergolf, golf and subgolf. The first is too serious to be talked much of here. It is hushed and tense and holy. An ever-widening area of silence surrounds the shrine from which the supergolfer drives. If he takes as many as two practice swings or stops to put down his pipe it has widened to the tee back of him and the one before him. The other supergolfers cease to breathe and the one with a wrist watch hastily removes it and throws it away. The breeze dies, birds still their songs, and the man driving a mower far down the fairway stops to roll a noiseless cigarette. But when the supergolfers have reached the putting green a real silence ensues. The tension is tightened; the expensive, trained grass stops growing, the ants quit their uproar, the little worms beneath the sward cease their clamor; a pair of loud golf stockings would be instantly hissed to a quiet gray. The silence becomes positively noiseless.

Nor is this solemnity relaxed when the putting is done and the supergolfers pose on the green, leaning sportily against their putters, while an awe-stricken photographer snaps them for the front page of "Golf, Craps and Farming." The stillness is broken only at a distance by some common or subgolfers who blasphemously wish to use that green for their own contemptible putting. The supergolfers remain properly unaware of these loathsome insects. They eventually leave, however, to be photographed on the next green in some more golf attitudes for the double-page center of "Golf, Pole Vaulting and Dentistry in the Home."

And so it goes. The supergolfer need be followed no further. Besides, he is always annoyed by a gallery. He says so himself. Anyway he has nothing in common with the lesser species save an unconquerable tendency to miss three-foot putts. Let us observe, therefore, those of the lesser sort with whom golf is still an adventure.

Golf, the plain sort, is played by more or less tired business men who are off their game today. They hope sometime to become supergolfers. They know perfectly well they never will; still, they hope to. They can't help it. They dream, in secret, of some day blushing modestly on the White House front porch while President Harding in a few fitting words confers upon them a two-gallon sil-



Some competent professional will see that you are out-fitted with the right clubs. Oh, yes!

ver mug with three handles, hardly big enough to hold umbrellas and too big for anything else. They already have a few smaller cups, suitable for holding lump sugar, won in the Allied Metal Trades and Drugs tournament with a handicap of twenty-two, but nothing you would really call attention to except in a spirit of jolly good fun.

This big affair, from the hands of the President, is a different matter. And if only they could cure that slice and get some distance with the wood and some more distance with the iron and learn the chip shot and quit topping them and acquire the right putting stance—because, of course, if you have to take three putts on every green, look what it does to your score! So they prevail upon good old Angus McAngus to come out with them twice a week in the hope of working these little miracles. Their clubs are religiously cleaned after each round, and their cards are preserved to be studied in the long winter evenings when practice is confined to a few perfect swings in the library, and too bad the rose jar happened to be just at that point on the mantel! Why couldn't it have been kept on the hall stand? Then nothing would have happened. Well, no good talking about it. It's gone, isn't it? Anyway, that was the right idea, the club head passing through a flattened arc into and past the ball, just the way it does in

the diagram. Like this, now. Gee! Well, then keep the children out of the room. It's past their bedtime anyway. Now let's see—he says it's a flick of the wrists that turns on the juice. Oh, I'm not hurting the old rug, am I? Now, wait—let's see that diagram a minute.

And so forth.

Besides various bibelots in the home this golfer has twice broken ninety on an actual course. Of course he didn't break it beyond repair; still eighty-nine isn't so rotten, is it, for a man that took up the fool game only eight years ago? And there lies the chief of the plain golfer's delusions. He believes sincerely that he took up the game. But it was nothing so gentle or so voluntary as that. He was stricken with it and will never recover. He will pass out at last, still visioning himself modestly erect, the three-quarter view toward the photographer, while the President tells him that he is a credit to American sport and here is this splendid trophy, and so forth. He will be viewing a halftone of this scene in "Golf, Poultry and Beadwork," and on the opposite page another halftone in which his defeated opponent is warmly wringing his hand. The defeated opponent is seen to be Chick Evans.

On the bedside table among the medicine bottles will be a copy of "Golf, Croquet and Osteopathy"

lying open at *How to Correct Your Faults With Plenty of Diagrams*, by Angus McAngus. In his last lucid moment he will recall that at one time or another—but not in the same round—he has made every hole on his course in par, with a birdie on the hard sixth on August 3, 1918. But no one else will remember this of him; no one in all the wide world. His playmates will remember him kindly, no doubt, but if they recall any birdies it will be their own. They will say that Bill was a good scout, but they will be much more likely to recall that spell when he had such hard luck with the dice and had to sign the lunch check for the gang nine times running. They will never say that he had the makings of a finalist. They will more probably say that he certainly put that pipe-and-fittings concern on its feet after he once got control of the stock. The closest they will come to golf in their chat about him will be to remark in reverent tones that he died worth over fifty cases of Scotch. Yet no golfer will be dismayed by the brutal realism of this picture. It would do him no good if he were. He has been stricken. Dismay wouldn't help him. Nothing will.

And that is golf.

We now come to the rest of us, or subgolfers. The supergolfer has style and hence is called a

stylist. The golfer has form, but is not hence called a formist. For some reason this word has not yet been invented. But the subgolfer has neither form nor style and is never called much of anything worth repeating. Yet let it be said at once that we are the only class of golfers of any real importance to the game. We are its spine and sinews, comprising ninety-two per cent of its players. Lacking us the supergolfer could not play his tournaments nor be photographed for "Golf, Pastry and Plumbing." Lacking us the golfer could never dramatize that tender little scene before the executive mansion. For there would be no links to perform on. You might see one link here and there, but not more. It is we who pay the bills for all the lush spread of land that would otherwise be producing rutabagas, shotes and other table delicacies. Lacking us, golf-ball makers would not be thinking up catchy new names for balls that will give more yardage than any other ball on the market, nor thinking up machines to etch your name into the ball's surface. As if that did any good! Shall I not today play with a ball into the surface of which has been deeply bitten the meaningless inscription "Geo. S. Garritt" or something? What of it? The name didn't prevent its being knocked into the far rough by unspeakably clumsy dub playing, did it, nor prevent me from

finding it when I happened to be over there, did it?

And lacking us subgolfers, where would golf literature be? Answer: it wouldn't. I have omitted to point out that for the subgolfer golf consists largely of literature. The mere golfer plays by book now and then, but not steadily, as we do. And the literature of golf came about in this way: The subgolfer, coming to the game with a fresh, unspoiled mind, is cursed with a belief that much may be learned about it from a printed page. So he demands reading matter. And so good old Angus McAngus writes a nice thick book on how to play golf. That is, not exactly. His name is on it and the photographs are all of Angus; a close-up of his right elbow at top of swing, his left ankle at the same tremendous crisis, the sole of his left shoe and the mole on his chin when nearest his right wrist; also his famous interlocking grip, looking like a bunch of severely twisted bananas. These photographs are all authentic and are labeled Fig. 1, Fig. 2, and so forth. But the book is written by a friend of Angus who knows how to spell a lot of words Angus has never had any occasion to use, including the word "pronate," and who imagines the way Angus would tell how to play golf if only Angus knew himself.

Perhaps Angus after reading the book will be-

gin to think he does know how he does it, but he will be wrong there. All he really knows about his game is that he was sanctified to it at the age of nine and has never done anything but play it, not being vexed with a pipe-and-fittings concern. He actually knows that he can catfoot up to the ball and clout it on the nose right. But there he gets off.

Nevertheless here is the book, a beautiful creation costing five-fifty, with about two hundred glimpses of different bits of Angus in action. He has easily learned, after a few lessons, to stand still while being photographed. And the subgolfer pays and pays and pays, believing his worries are over. The book is cordial and reassuring, yet stern; stern enough to keep the subgolfer thinking he must have got his money's worth. It begins about this way:

"It is of the utmost importance that the tyro should early grasp the three prime essentials of the game, which are—first, the stance; second, the grip; and third, the swing. There are golfing authorities who will maintain, with some shadow of plausibility, one must concede, that the swing is more prime than any of the other essentials, but a long study of the essentials of the game has convinced me that the other two essentials are fully as prime as this one.

"Having grasped the prime essentials the tyro will do well to next put himself in the hands of some competent professional, who will see that he is outfitted with the right clubs. Much depends upon this. Even the bag should be selected by your professional. Do not make the mistake of rushing off to a department store and buying a bag that happens to look good. Only a trustworthy professional can do this for you.

"He will charge you about twelve dollars more for the same bag, but everything depends upon getting started right, and even the purchase of the bag is a prime essential in what we have come to term the psychology of the game.

"Next in order for the tyro are the lessons from some good professional. A good deal may be obtained from a book like this, but lessons are a prime essential. They are almost one of the prime essentials there is."

And so forth.

Follows instructive comment, enlivened with Figs. 1, 2, 3, up to Fig. 186, which is merely a photograph of Angus not doing anything but having his photograph taken after shooting the home course in sixty-seven.

This is what keeps the subgolfer up nights: "It is hardly necessary to tell the tyro," says Angus, "that the first step is to get the correct line from

ball to hole—the straight line.” Of course it is hardly necessary, old top, but if you didn’t tell him a lot of hardly necessary things, where would your book be? So the subgolfer reads on, fascinated by the things that are hardly necessary to tell him, enthralled by the halftones of Angus’ right hip and the diagramed relation of his left ear to his left shoulder at top of swing. On he reads to How to Avoid Slicing Your Putts, with a spirited portrait of Angus engaged in avoiding a sliced putt. And then back to the grip: “I bring my left hand over,” confides Angus, “until I can count all my knuckles.” The subgolfer rejoices in this. It seems to him that if Angus counted up and found a couple of his knuckles missing he would be hiking back to the last tee to look for them. He resolves always to count his own knuckles carefully.

But Angus is never dogmatic. There is nice feeling among these golf writers. Angus may admit that, after years of deep study, he has become convinced that the interlocking grip is the ideal grip; still, he doesn’t say it is the only ideal grip, and the tyro must remember that Sandy McHaggis is strong for the open grip, while good old Cluny McWhoosh has for years obtained brilliant results with the merely overlapping grip. “It is, after all,” warns Angus, “a detail that must be decided

by the individual player for himself." The subgolfer wishes Angus would be a little more positive. But he buys the McHaggis and the McWhoosh brochures, with more photographs of grips and right elbows and left ankles and teeth and pipes and moles and hair and spiked shoes. He is hoping one of them will tell him the only right way to hold his club so he can go on with the rest of his education, but this never happens. Only another subgolfer can tell him the only right way. Any subgolfer after six lessons can tell him the only right way to do everything from driving to putting.

But the tyro, as he is never called outside golf books, keeps on reading. He buys more books and subscribes to "Golf, Brewing and Basket Weaving," to get those bully articles on the chip shot, with photographs showing the feet fairly close together so one is not likely to pull the shot, and so forth. He never wearies of studying the picture of Davy Macdivot's follow through, nor of reading underneath it the beautiful words, "I use the Vardon grip with the little finger of the right hand overlapping the index finger of the left." And he is captivated by the picture of Davy in "Golf, Checkers and Beadwork," playing out of trouble. This shows a minor ditch, a blur-r-r-r of club shaft and the ball starting for the green, followed by a fine



Any subgolfer after six lessons can tell you the only right way to do everything from driving to putting.

mess of sand, like a comet trailing its tail. If he gets into a hole like that tomorrow he will try to recall just what it was that Davy seemed to be doing with his wrists and his feet and his knees and his club.

There is other literature in which the subgolfer rejoices. He follows all the big matches. He loves to read how Hagen laid his mashie second dead and chipped off a birdie on the notoriously hard twelfth at the Chicago Stockyards course. How Jock sent the ball away with a crisp snap on a straight line and proved unbeatable on all short shots from a chip to a long pitch. How Barnes made a sensational recovery, nabbing a two-hole lead. How Mitchell dashed out in thirty-three and how, though under a racking strain due to trouble on the fifteenth and seventeenth, nevertheless came romping in with a thirty-eight. And how Chick took his opponent for a merry walk for the full thirty-six-hole route.

Also, if nothing more exciting offers he will read about golf being splendid exercise. He believes in this reading. He undoubtedly believes that Angus McAngus became the man he is among us today by studying a book. He pictures the bleak moorland with fairways stretching to every horizon, broken only by bunkers that add a touch of grim-

ness to the wild scene. It is midnight. Standing not far from the ninth green is the humble burn, or crofter, that was the childhood home of Angus, and inside the laddie is studying his lesson by the light of a simple tweed knot. Outside he hears the mournful call of the upland kiltie to its mate. A fur-bearing haggis lurks along the bank of the claymore, seeking its prey. Just beyond the pibroch a faithful old byre is smoking a few last pipefuls of peat for the adjacent distillery. The boyish impulse to be a part of this night life is manfully stifled. He knows he will never shoot a sixty-eight unless he studies. He kindles a fresh tweed and brings his page nearer the wavering flame. The room is chill and he pulls closer about his bony knees the rug he has crocheted from the pure heather. His eyes are heavy with sleep, but he must master this photograph, Fig. 19, showing about one dozen fingers and thumbs jammed into the interlocking grip. Before sleep can come he must master this to the last detail, or some day he might get up on a tee and forget how to count his knuckles. He kindles a fresh tweed from the dying one and studies on. This is the way the subgolfer undoubtedly sees the beginnings of Angus. If he didn't he would buy fewer golf books.

But after all his reading practice, how does the subgolfer actually play? Of course that is different, because he only took up the game to get out into the open. And a foursome of subgolfers is further distinguished by the circumstance that not one of them should have tried to play today. This is brought out on the first tee as follows:

EDDIE: Gents, I see my finish today. Up all night with this tooth of mine. Where I ought to be—I ought to be at the dentist's right this minute.

BILL: You got nothing on me, old pippin. Maybe you think driving that car a hundred and ten miles is good for a man's game. It certainly always puts mine on the blink. I can't hit a ball with anything.

GEORGE: Talk about game! You guys are lucky. Look at me. (*To caddie*): Say, son, go back and tell Alec if a telegram comes for me to be sure and send it out after us. (*To his playmates again*): That partner of mine must have drunk something wrong down in New York. Got him in Bellevue. On a big deal down there, too. I may have to go down and swing it myself. I really ought to start now, but I'll dub along with you fellows a few holes. This deal's got me worried, I'll disclose to the universe. Oh, my golf'll be good, all right, all right!

Doc: Gosh, I knew I shouldn't have et that pie à la mode. Always makes me lopy.

But do they pause while there is yet time, or do they persist in going on with what, under these distressing circumstances, can only be the most wretched farce? You need but one guess. They are presently teasing balls down the fairway or through the neighboring jungles, and for the moment their troubles seem to be strangely forgotten. In fact they will be again referred to only after unwontedly bad shots. In the main they progress cheerfully. This is where the subgolfer has it on the golfer and the supergolfer. He visibly enjoys playing. For him no tense solemnity on tee or green. He seems to have learned that he can never attain the higher golf. That is, he would have you infer that he has learned this. Secretly, to be sure, he nurses all sorts of absurd hopes, for this may not be avoided by one who plays the game ever so lightly, but he does not wear his heart on his sweater sleeve. He romps from tee to tee and converses as the spirit moves him. The man on the mower is always glad to see a foursome of him because they give him a longer rest from fixing his machine. He can't fix that forever, and if it were not for the subgolfers he might have to do some mowing.

As likely as not the foursome will pause by him

while Doc tells the good one about the bright little girl who brought all those glasses of water for her mother's guests, or while Eddie asks if they have heard this one that he just got from a man back in the grill, and if they have, stop him, and anyway he can't give the dialect. The man with the mower is pleased with this unhurried pace and asks them what time it is. He will also ask the next subgolfers what time it is. He would be arrested for asking real or supergolfers this—but let us be on with the foursome.

There is chatter and badinage even within the sacred purlieus of the tee, a spirit of levity for which a supergolfer, having the power, would order them all to be shot. But what care they? The scene is now the fourth tee.

Doc drives with a mighty swing; but he has little resembled Angus McAngus in Fig. 26 of Golf and How to Play it. His ball wabbles haltingly a dozen feet to the left oblique. He glares after it in profound amazement and makes a noise with his tongue. He seems to be pronouncing the name of the fly that causes sleeping sickness. Hearty laughter and cheers from the bench.

GEORGE (*loudly*): Looks to me like his gears don't mesh.

EDDIE (*loudly*): Naw, 'tain't that—he's got cement wrists.

BILL (*confidentially but audibly to all concerned*): Oh, well, I used to be that way until I took——(*He names that popular remedy to be read about under the portrait of Civil War Veteran Hale and Hearty.*)

DOC (*he has been trying to recall the photograph of Davy Macdivot's swing. He now turns to the wits, who instantly become graven of face. He speaks with mild irritation*): Say, what is this—a game of golf or what? If you stiffs would can that chatter mebbe I could hit sump'n.

(*They can it. They even agree that DOC may drive a second ball without penalty because of the motor car that back-fired just as he shot. BILL, however, humorously hopes the U. S. G. A. will never learn of this breach of the rules. He says they mustn't breathe it to a soul. DOC drives and gets well away. He says he could do it every time if he kept his head down.*)

(*On a later hole George makes the deep ditch with a well-topped ball. He thereupon indicates a pedestrian in the background.*)

GEORGE: Say, I bet that's a guy with that telegram for me. I saw him coming and couldn't keep my eye on the ball. We got a lot at stake on that deal.

(The guy approaches while GEORGE registers anxiety. He proves to be the man from the mower. He wants to know what time it is now. EDDIE, BILL and DOC then drive into the big ditch, employing various swings, since the individual must choose his own style of play.)

BILL: Well, gentlemen, we lie alike, so what's the matter with starting over again and not counting those first ones?

EDDIE: Sure! It's all among friends, ain't it?

GEORGE: All right, far's I'm concerned. I made this hole in four last Wednesday. I could prob'ly have done it again today if I hadn't thought that guy had my telegram.

DOC: Sure thing! Why not? All start over. In the first place, that ditch never ought to be there. Penalizes a good drive, that's all it does.

CHORUS: Sure, that's just what it does—ought to fill it up—ought to move the tee forward—I'm going to take that up with the greens committee. *(Etc., etc.)*

Ultimately the misplaced ditch, crime of a fanatic golf architect, is behind them and they hole out. The scoring is marked by a slight acerbity when George insists that he had nine, against a very general impression that he took eleven. The others wish to be told if he includes putts. George sticks to nine and says he should have had an

eight, only he fooled away that last easy one. Eddie says he should have had a six, and feels of his tooth to prove it.

They progress in a manner shocking to refined sensibilities such as exist in the higher golf circles. But they like it; and because they like it several hundred thousand acres of choice land are saved from mere sordid agriculture.

On the approach to the eighteenth green George says to Doc, "We lie alike, don't we? I'm four."

"Yes," says Doc, "we lie alike."

"I've got a rotten score," says George, "but I should worry. I only play this fool game for the exercise."

"Me, too," says Doc. "You'd never see me touch a club if it didn't get me out in the open."

And here, too, they lie alike. Each would continue the game if it had to be played in airtight compartments. For each secretly dreams that he will some day burn up the old course with a seventy-four.

And that is golf.

There remains a word to be said of women golfers. A few are supergolfers. A few more are golfers. These profoundly irritate the male subgolfer by doing it too well. They cause him to say that woman's place is in the home and why doesn't she

stay where she belongs? He watches her shoot the long sixth in par and says warmly that he prefers the womanly woman. That is what he says, and you know what he means.

As to the sort of game played by the woman subgolfer, fabric hats of silk, some of black with appliquéd leaves of contrasting colored taffeta couched on with angora, and others of French felt beaded in Indian colorings; in several instances the slightly drooping brim narrows noticeably at the back, revealing a bit of the coiffure. The French ever-so-slightly girdled frock with miniature sleeves and straight or round neck line. Yellow of gold, ripe of corn, of autumn leaves and of jonquils has been a favorite color for several weeks. Now the tide promises to turn toward violets, deep purples and reddish tones in the glowing rich petunia and fuchsia shades. A collarless, short-sleeved sweater of heaviest fiber silk, hand knitted, has running all through it an intricate Bulgarian-peasant embroidery motif in black wool, not embroidered on but cunningly knitted into the garment itself. The silk knitted dress, falling in straight chemise line, in a deep brick red, interwoven in arabesque designs of tarnished platinum metal threads. Chamois gloves stitched with outside seams and wrinkled becomingly over the lower arm are new and especially good. Smart shoes of moccasin-color

buckskin with a broad strap about the instep of rich Russia leather, caught snug with a tiny cord through small unbound eyelets. A stocking of heather mixture with gay pattern of diamond criss-cross along the front or showing deep purling—and that is golf.

Yet in spite of it all, few victims ever wholly recover. Now and then one of exceptional strength of mind will pass from the acute to the merely chronic stage, but no case is known where the virus, once in the blood, has been wholly eliminated; it remains a permanent menace, and the sufferer is never freed from the fear of relapse. My own case is in point. For many careless years I was immune apparently. I frequented contagion zones in fancied security. I had analyzed the game. I said pithily that golf was too much of a walk for a good game and just enough game to spoil a good walk.

Then I took up golf, as I lightly said. I took it up the way people take up smallpox or the black plague, which is the only way anyone ever takes up golf. The initial attack was most severe. It was diagnosed as the black, or confluent golf. As Mrs. Etta Schwartz, of Macon, Georgia, confides to the press, I suffered untold agonies and my friends gave me up. With a temperature running

eight over par I would say that golf was a great game because it took my mind off my work. I deluded myself with this thought until it became all too plain that I must find some new kind of work to take my mind off golf. The old work simply wasn't doing it. I was swept on by the tide. And only bulldog determination ever saved me; bulldog determination and the final bitter knowledge that the day would never come when I could be safely entrusted with a loaded mashie. I admit that this last item helped me lower the temperature back to par. Anyway, I am looking for something else to take my mind off my work. Golf no longer does it. I can now take golf or let it alone. If I feel the old fever rising I have only to go out and try a few mashie shots.

Lately there were three whole days when I never went near the course. Playing in oilskins is ruinous to the swing. Of course I haven't given the game up. There's the exercise, and it gets one out into the open, even if there isn't the slightest hope of ever shooting a decent round. And I will say that I am not always so bad on some holes, not for one who has only played a year.

Of course I'm not through with the game, by any means. It is an excellent diversion for one who can play it temperately. Besides, Bill tells me that the interlocking grip is, after all, the only sure



Then I took up golf, as I lightly said. The initial attack was most severe.

one to cure a slice. A friend of his who is chummy with the pro up at Lakeside has shown him precisely how not to slice with this grip and Bill is going to show me the little trick. Of course with that slice out and a few lessons with the mashie, my game would be different. And this new book of Davy Macdivot's has a bully lot of photographs on the chip shot. You can see just how the iron comes down, going from *a* to *b* on the flattened arc, and not from *a* to *c*, which gives the ball a nasty hook. Probably I've been going from *a* to *c* without knowing it. And there is that new driver with ivory diamonds set in the face. That ought to make a difference. And I hear there's a putter just published that you simply can't miss with. You never can tell about this game. Lots of those scratch men were dubs not so long ago. And do I ever really expect to break into the eighties? Well, yes and no. But, of course, there's the exercise and everything.

And that is golf.

